



Release: April 16, 2004
Contact: Jim Grebing at 573-751-9065 or
Bill Niblack at 573-751-3637

Missouri Department of
Economic Development
P.O. Box 1157
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-1157
www.missouridevelopment.org

Missouri's Labor Market Conditions Spring Back in March

Missouri labor market conditions rebounded strongly in March. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged down a tenth of a point to 5.0 percent while, during the same period, Missouri companies added 18,000 jobs to the state's economy.

With the exception of the unusually low 4.7 percent rate reported in January, March's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is at its lowest level since September 2001 (4.8 percent). It also continues to remain well below the national seasonally adjusted rate, which rose a tenth of a point to 5.7 percent in March.

The not-seasonally-adjusted rate was 5.1 percent in March, down from 5.6 percent in February and 5.8 percent in March 2003 and nearly a whole percentage point lower than the nation's unemployment rate of 6.0 percent.

"We are pleased with this latest data because it continues to reflect strong economic growth trends that we have been seeing in Missouri for some time," said Department of Economic Development Director Kelvin L. Simmons. "Not only is our unemployment rate well below the national rate and six-tenths of a point below where it was a year ago, we are also seeing job growth. In fact, since July we have added nearly 30,000 net jobs in the state, which is certainly a trend we are excited about."

Non-farm payroll employment increased by 18,000 jobs between February and March. Furthermore, February's employment level was revised upward. As a result, the March employment level of 2,687,300 jobs is 6,200 jobs higher than it was in January and is at the highest level since the end of 2002.

Nodaway and Boone Counties had the lowest unemployment rates at 1.7 percent and 2.1 percent respectively. The highest unemployment rates were recorded in Wayne County (10.1 percent), Taney County (12.7 percent) and Stone County (14.3 percent); however, each of these counties did experience a significant decrease in the unemployment rate between February and March.

Most industry groups reported employment gains in March, on a seasonally adjusted basis. Those that experienced decreases in February generally bounced back in March. Gains included construction 7,800; trade, transportation and utilities 2,900; professional and business services 1,200; leisure and hospitality 1,500; and other services 4,100.

Over the past year, employment has gained 9,900 jobs, or 0.4 percent (not seasonally adjusted). Industries growing over the year include: construction 5,400; credit intermediation 2,200; real estate 1,200; administrative, support & waste management services 1,500; private educational services 1,300; health care & social assistance 4,600; arts, entertainment and recreation 1,200; food services & drinking places 5,700; and other services 3,600 jobs.

Some industries remained mired in recessionary or structural problems. Transportation employment is down by 4,300 jobs (primarily in the airline sector); telecommunications by 3,500; professional, scientific and technical services by 2,100; accommodations by 1,800; and government by 1,700. Despite having been heading upward since last summer, manufacturing is still 3,500 jobs below the year-earlier level. In the durable goods sector, employment is 400 jobs higher than it was a year earlier, as gains in some industries (including machinery and transportation equipment) have offset losses in others (including computer and electronic products and electrical equipment.)

MISSOURI UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
FOR METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS (MSAs), LABOR MARKET AREAS (LMAs), AND COUNTIES
CURRENT MONTH (MARCH 2004), PREVIOUS TWO MONTHS (JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2004), AND YEAR AGO (MARCH 2003)

	MAR 2004	FEB 2004	JAN 2004	MAR 2003		MAR 2004	FEB 2004	JAN 2004	MAR 2003
U.S. (not seasonally adjusted)	6.0	6.0	6.3	6.2	Atchison	3.0	3.8	3.5	2.8
MISSOURI	5.1	5.6	5.4	5.8	Audrain	4.6	5.3	4.9	6.1
ST. LOUIS MSA	5.4	5.8	5.6	5.8	Barton	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.4
Franklin	5.4	6.4	6.0	6.4	Bates	7.5	9.0	7.7	7.6
Jefferson	5.5	6.2	5.6	6.2	Benton	6.8	8.6	7.8	8.3
Lincoln	5.8	7.4	6.4	6.9	Caldwell	7.0	9.1	7.5	8.1
St. Charles	3.9	4.3	4.0	4.2	Carroll	4.9	6.1	5.7	6.6
St. Louis County	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.9	Cedar	6.9	6.8	5.7	7.5
Warren	5.5	6.4	5.8	6.9	Chariton	5.2	6.9	6.4	6.3
St. Louis City	8.7	8.5	8.9	9.2	Clark	8.1	8.8	8.6	8.4
KANSAS CITY MSA	5.6	5.8	5.7	6.0	Cooper	3.5	4.6	3.5	4.4
Cass	5.1	6.1	5.4	5.1	Crawford	6.8	7.9	7.2	8.3
Clay	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.3	Dade	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.6
Clinton	5.3	6.5	5.5	6.2	Dallas	5.2	5.9	6.0	6.9
Jackson	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.4	Daviess	6.1	7.2	6.6	6.6
Lafayette	5.5	6.6	5.1	5.6	DeKalb	4.8	5.9	5.1	6.2
Platte	3.7	4.0	3.7	4.0	Dent	6.3	7.4	7.6	7.8
Ray	6.2	6.6	5.7	6.3	Douglas	7.0	8.0	8.5	10.0
SPRINGFIELD MSA	3.5	3.8	3.8	4.1	Dunklin	7.2	7.9	7.9	8.6
Christian	4.1	4.9	5.2	5.1	Gasconade	5.0	6.0	6.4	6.6
Greene	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.8	Gentry	3.3	4.1	3.9	4.1
Webster	3.5	4.0	3.8	4.4	Grundy	4.9	5.6	5.8	6.8
JOPLIN MSA	4.3	4.3	4.4	5.3	Harrison	5.4	6.3	6.0	6.0
Jasper	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.9	Henry	7.2	8.1	7.6	8.7
Newton	4.1	4.3	4.5	5.9	Hickory	9.5	10.7	10.7	10.4
COLUMBIA MSA	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.3	Holt	4.6	5.6	4.5	6.1
Boone	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.3	Howard	4.0	4.6	4.1	4.6
ST. JOSEPH MSA	5.3	5.9	5.4	6.2	Iron	9.1	9.6	9.0	9.6
Andrew	4.9	5.8	5.2	5.4	Johnson	3.8	4.5	3.9	4.1
Buchanan	5.4	5.9	5.5	6.4	Knox	4.1	4.6	4.3	5.0
ADAIR-SCHUYLER LMA	4.3	4.6	4.5	4.8	Laclede	8.0	8.5	8.9	10.3
Adair	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.2	Lewis	5.5	5.0	4.5	5.8
Schuyler	7.0	7.5	7.3	8.1	Linn	5.3	7.8	8.2	7.9
BUTLER-CARTER-RIPLEY LMA	5.0	5.4	5.4	6.1	Livingston	4.2	5.6	5.0	5.4
Butler	4.5	4.8	4.7	5.7	McDonald	5.1	5.2	5.3	6.5
Carter	7.3	7.8	7.6	8.2	Macon	5.5	7.0	6.7	6.7
Ripley	5.7	6.8	7.3	6.6	Madison	6.9	7.4	6.8	9.3
CAMDEN-MILLER LMA	6.9	8.8	8.8	8.2	Mercer	5.3	5.8	5.8	9.5
Camden	6.5	8.0	8.5	8.1	Monroe	7.4	8.6	8.0	8.2
Miller	7.4	10.0	9.2	8.4	Montgomery	6.5	7.5	7.0	8.7
CAPE GIRARDEAU-SCOTT-NEW MADRID LMA	4.8	5.2	5.1	5.8	Morgan	7.5	9.4	8.7	8.3
Bollinger	6.3	6.4	5.7	7.5	Nodaway	1.7	2.5	2.1	2.4
Cape Girardeau	3.7	3.8	3.7	4.0	Ozark	5.1	6.7	6.8	6.5
Mississippi	5.9	6.7	7.6	6.8	Pemiscot	9.2	9.4	9.7	12.7
New Madrid	7.2	8.2	8.4	11.8	Perry	3.0	3.4	2.8	3.6
Scott	5.4	5.8	5.6	6.0	Pettis	4.9	5.4	5.7	5.8
COLE-CALLAWAY-MONITEAU LMA	2.8	3.3	3.1	3.6	Pike	5.0	6.2	5.3	5.9
Callaway	3.0	3.8	3.4	3.9	Polk	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.4
Cole	2.4	2.7	2.5	3.1	Pulaski	4.4	4.7	4.7	4.8
Moniteau	3.5	4.7	3.8	3.9	Putnam	5.1	5.7	5.4	9.0
Osage	3.5	4.0	4.1	4.8	Randolph	4.8	5.4	5.2	5.6
HOWELL-OREGON-SHANNON LMA	5.3	5.7	5.8	5.7	Reynolds	9.0	9.8	10.4	10.2
Howell	4.8	5.2	5.1	5.2	St. Clair	6.3	7.3	7.2	8.7
Oregon	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.7	Ste. Genevieve	5.1	6.0	5.1	6.0
Shannon	9.0	9.9	10.2	8.6	Saline	4.4	4.7	4.4	5.7
LAWRENCE-BARRY LMA	4.5	5.2	5.0	5.4	Scotland	4.4	4.7	5.0	5.8
Barry	4.4	5.3	5.3	5.5	Shelby	6.2	7.9	7.0	7.2
Lawrence	4.5	5.0	4.8	5.3	Stoddard	5.7	6.4	6.7	6.7
MARION-RALLS LMA	5.5	6.3	5.8	6.6	Stone	14.3	20.1	20.5	13.9
Marion	5.3	5.6	5.4	6.2	Sullivan	6.6	7.9	8.0	14.6
Ralls	6.2	8.2	6.9	7.8	Taney	12.7	17.7	19.1	12.9
PHELPS-MARIES LMA	3.2	3.8	3.4	3.8	Texas	7.6	8.9	8.2	8.9
Maries	3.6	3.8	3.5	4.0	Vernon	4.9	5.0	4.8	5.3
Phelps	3.1	3.7	3.4	3.7	Wayne	10.1	10.9	10.2	12.1
ST. FRANCOIS-WASHINGTON LMA	6.6	7.4	6.9	8.1	Worth	4.2	5.2	4.7	3.5
St. Francois	6.2	6.7	6.3	7.1	Wright	7.9	8.5	7.9	8.0
Washington	7.7	9.3	8.4	10.5					

NOTE: DATA FOR COUNTIES WITHIN MSAs/LMAs ARE DISAGGREGATED FROM MSA/LMA TOTALS.

NOTE: 2003 DATA FOR SUBSTATE AREAS HAVE BEEN REVISED BUT ARE PROVISIONAL: NOT YET OFFICIAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PRODUCED BY MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MERIC, IN COOPERATION WITH U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS